THE Flodden Field

FIELD OF FLOWDON,

A DESCRIPTIVE

POEM.

Duris ut ilex tonſa bipennibus
Nigrae feraci frondis in Algido,
Per damna, per caedes, ab ipſo
Ducit opes, animumque ferro.

Merſes profundo, pulchrior evenit ;
Luctere, multa proruet integrum
Cum laude victorem, geretque
Proelia conjugibus loquenda.

HOR. Carm. Lib. IV. Ode 4.

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THE BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

FIELD OF FLOWDON,

A

DESCRIPTIVE POEM.

They have fallen like the oak of the deſart, when it lies acroſs a ſtream, and withers in the wind of the mountains.

Such were the words of the Bards in the days of the ſong, when the King heard the muſic of harps, and the tales of other times. OSSIAN.

WHEN hoſtile FLOWDON's fatal field
Was drench'd in blood, of gallant heroes ſlain,

And

And princely chiefs who hapleſs preſs'd the plain,
No more the dread of foes in fight, no more their
countries ſhield;
Beſet with ghaſtly ſpectres round,
A horrid ſhade with Gorgon terrors crown'd
The grizly monarch hover'd o'er,
And flapp'd his weary pinions dropping gore,
Like a fell vulture gorg'd among the dead.
The fiend of diſcord rear'd her ſnaky head,
Her demons howl, her vengeful torches wave,
She ſtalks where dead men groan, ſhe haunts red TIL-
LUS wat'ry grave.

They by the cruel doom of fight
The flow'r of CALEDON, the great, the good,
Their ſnowy limbs lac'd with their golden blood,
Groan furth their ſouls: vain was their warlike might,

In

In vain in glitt'ring terrors dreſt;
In vain ſat vict'ry on their plumy creſt*;
In vain the mighty ſunk o'erpowr'd
Beneath the brandiſh'd lightning of their ſword;
Heav'n ſeals their doom: Leave, leave ye fair!
Your gaudy looms, and other weeds prepare:
Prepare your ſable weeds, in honour of the brave;
And weave your true love's winding-ſheet for his untimely grave.

And you ye courtly train! who wait
With loud tongu'd harps, to hail your Lord's return;

* All hiſtorians allow, that, in the beginning of this fatal conflict, the King of Scots carried all before him, and, with the forces from the north, intirely routed that part of the Engliſh army, where the Earl of Surry had placed his ſon Sir Edward Howard, one, who, in reſpect of valour, and perſonal courage, was inferior to none.

Ah! with what ſounds of dol›r muſt ye mourn,
How ſadly change the chords of joy, to wail his hapleſs
fate!
No more victorious from the foughten plain,
He loads you with the treaſures of the ſlain;
No more enthron'd amid his warlike peers
Enjoys the martial ſong of former years;
The ſtrength of war, the people's ſhield
Lies ſtretch'd in FLOWDON's fatal field:
Like MARS he led the hoſt with riſing morn*,
At eve a fall'n ſtar, of all his radiant glories ſhorn.

Thus

* JAMES performed wonders, as the hiſtorian obſerves. He diſmounted from his horſe, and commanding all his nobles and gentlemen, who fought next his perſon, to do the like, he ſpread fear and death wherever he turned his force: but in the end, this brave battalion was overpowered by numbers. The nobleſt and braveſt of the army then formed themſelves into a ring, and refuſing quarter, fought to the laſt, chooſing rather to fall with that Prince by an honourable death, than to ſave their lives by an ignominious flight.

Thus lowly for their country laid,
And gaſh'd with many a ſtreaming wound,
The valiant ſunk their Prince around,
And ſtretch'd their gory limbs in honour's bed.
Huſh'd was the horrid din of arms,
The neighing ſteed the victor's proud alarms;
Deep ſilence reign'd, ſave o'er the purpl'd heath
Aſcend with awful pauſe, the heavy groans of death:
Save that with dolorous horns afar,
SURRY drew off his broken ranks of war;
He mourn'd his bowmen fall'n in fight,
And veil'd his trembling fears, in the dun ſhades of night.

But when the MERCIAN files with dauntleſs look,
With martial trumps and clanging arms,
Such as might rouſe the dead to war's alarms,

Their

Their SCOTTISH ſpears yet firmly ſhook;
Shook all the hills and valleys ſteep,
And ſtarti'd the quick ear of coward ſleep,
The dying heroes bleſs'd the warlike ſound.
Thrice DOUGLAS, where he preſs'd the bloody ground*
Amidſt his foes, his dreadful creſt diſplay'd,
And thrice he wav'd his flaming blade,
" O Heav'n! might DOUGLAS riſe to ſee
The pride of ENGLAND laid in duſt, his king and country free."
ARGYLE and LENNOX where they lay †,
With ST. CLAIR, MAXWELL, GORDON bold,
Whoſe

* John Douglas Earl of Morton, with George Maſter of Angus, and many brave men of their vaſſals, were among the ſlain.

† Archibald Campbell Earl of Argyle, Malcolm Stuart Earl of Lennox, William Sinclair Earl of Caithneſs, John Lord Maxwell, and his three brothers, Alexander Gordon Marquis of Huntly, were among many who made that day lamentable to their country by their death.

Whoſe ſpear the Engliſh bows control'd,
Like bloody lions panting o'er their prey,
Attend with joy their ſhouting phalanx boaſt.
And thou fall'n captain of a mighty hoſt!
Heroic JAMES! thy gen'rous ſwelling ſoul
Deep groaning o'er thy people's bitter dole,
Their ſtrength, their glory fall'n by doom of war,
Hover'd a while and ſooth'd thy ſad deſpair;
He heard his trumpet blow, he ſaw his banners fly,
And, ſmiling in the pangs of death, ſprung to the ſtar-
ry ſky.

O horrid FLOWDON! ſtain'd with kindred gore,
The tomb of parricide, thy children's grave;

Not Ocean's brine thy guilt ſhall lave ;
Nor TILLUS thine ! ſtill ſeek TWEED's wat'ry ſhore, *
Thy guilty head ſtill ſtrive to hide,
And plunge thee in a purer tide ;
In vain ! the ſtory of thy crimes
Shall chill the bold to future times :
The ſheeted ghoſt ſhall haunt thy ſtream,
Night ravens wail with doleful ſcream,
And birds of prey : this treach'rous flood
Beheld thy ſons, O SCOTLAND ! ſlain, and drunk her children's blood.

Tho' for the brave ſpread on th' inſanguin'd plain,
Beating their tender breaſts fond mothers wail ;

Tho'

* The river Till which riſes out of Cheviot hills, runs by Wooler, and falls, after a winding courſe, into the Tweed. This the Engliſh paſſed at Melford, and hard by on a declivity, ſince famous by the name Flowdon, was this battle fought.

Tho' frantic widows rend with ſhrieks the vale,
And bathe each mangl'd corſe with briny tears in vain.
Tho' a whole land in ſackloth mourn'd,
And foes their rage to pity turn'd,
Still ſhall the muſe deplore their doom;
Still mark with her rude verſe the hero's tomb.
The ſick'ning ſun withdrew his clouded light,
The fiends relenting groan'd to the ſad night;
The night her pearly dews ſoft ſorrows ſhed,
And dunneſt ſhades, her mantle kind, flung o'er the
ſilent dead.

Calm peace and gentleſt ſlumbers wait
Where low the clay-cold hero lies:
Tho' here no pomp of fun'ral obſequies,
No martial trophies led, no ſteeds of ſtate,

Yet HONOUR true ſhall crown the brave,
And FREEDOM haunt the hallow'd grave;
Their deeds high in hiſtoric page
Shall riſe their monument to every age:
Their SWORD could turn the battle's tide,
Their COUNTRY's LOVE all death defy'd;
Their SOUL of GLORY then moſt loyal found
When with their Lord his Chieftains fell, transfix'd
with many an wound.

Tho' envy fierce with baſiliſk eye*
And noiſy clamour hell's foul harpies tear

The

* The invectives of modern ſcurrility and national abuſe, cannot fail to rouſe in every honeſt mind a juſt indignation. What venom of this kind has been of late vented to the ſhame of human nature! vented moſt undeſervedly againſt a generous, free, and warlike people! The authors and abettors of ſuch impotent malignity are equally contemptible, and the

miſchief

The wreath of praiſe, theſe fangs are blunted here ;
Your eagle-pinion'd fame to heav'n doth fly,
Your fame thro' the wide world is heard ;
This race victorious CESAR fear'd, *

miſchief they deſign'd, like the wicked counſel of Achitophel, recoils upon themſelves. The glory of an intrepid, virtuous, loyal, and great nation will be acknowledged by future ages with admiration, while the very memorial of the man who reviles his country, defies his ſovereign, and blaſphemes his God, ſhall periſh, leſt even the recollection of ſuch monſtrous wickedneſs, ſhould contaminate the principles of poſterity.

* Hiſtorians agree that the Roman legions never could reduce the Caledonians or North Britons, but contented themſelves with building the famous rampart known by the name of *Graham*'s *Dyke*, to reſtrain the inroads of the brave race, who, notwithſtanding, carried fire and ſword into the Roman Province, wearied out the patient valour of the legionaries, and obliged the emperors at laſt to relinquiſh all their conqueſts, and give up their claim to Britain.

Their ſword made DANISH ACHO yield, *
And EDWARD humbled in a bloody field ; †
And captive PIERCY with his Engliſh bow, ‡
Extoll'd the arm, which laid his bluſhing honours low
The chance of war is heav'ns dread doom,
The hand of fate, now SCOTLAND, brings thy heroes
to the tomb.

O

* King of Norway, now part of Denmark. He arrived nigh the iſland of Bute with 160 ſail, 20,000 ſoldiers, was intirely routed eſpecially by Alexander Stuart the great grandfather of James I.

† The famous defeat at Bannockburn, when Edward II. engaging with a handful of brave veterans under Robert the Bruce, loſt his whole army, and relinquiſhed his conqueſts.

‡ William Douglas ſon to Lord Archibald, laid waſte England to the gates of York; gained the famous battle of Otterburn againſt Lord Henry Piercy. The young hero Douglas loſt his life ; and Piercy, with his brother, and many others, were carried priſoners to Scotland.

O flow'r of valour! fall'n in war
Whoſe proweſs now ſhall ſave a ſinking land,
Or who fell fire and ſword withſtand?
I ſee the horrid fiends come on afar,
Amazement leads, as o'er the plain
Rude deſolation pours amain:
Oppreſſion rears her ſcourge of ſnakes,
Her iron chain grim bondage ſhakes,
Famine with faded form is there,
And pallid grief, and ſullen care,
And direful peſtilence with death combin'd
Sweeping with waſteful ſcythe, the remnant of mankind.

But lo! from ſacred manſions of the ſky,
Bright ſmiling peace with winged doves, deſcends:

Her

Her magic olive ſee the pow'r extends,
And back to hell's abode BELLONA's furies fly.
The land renews her wonted pride,
Her paſt'ral reed on green hill ſide
Reſounds ; the purple light of morn
Smiles o'er the vales of waving corn ;
Peace ſoothes with healing hand a nation's ſtound,
And pours her lenitive in ev'ry wound,
Unlocks the current of BRITANNIA's fame,
Her growing ſtrength, her riſing arts, her patriots kindling flame.

Like CONCORD thron'd, ſee ſov'reign ANNE* reſtrain
Two jealous realms, ſhe calms their ancient hate,

She

* The uniting of two great nations, whoſe fierce contentions had often proved fatal to themſelves, and ſpread terror and ruin among their neighbouring

She binds them ſtrong in one compacted ſtate,
Bids FREEDOM's banner wave, extends firm UNION's golden chain.
No more two ſiſter-nations wage
Deteſted war, with barb'rous civil rage:
The ſword of parricide is ſtain'd no more,
And their deſcending faulchions bluſh with only foreign gore.

bouring kingdoms. The forming theſe by the ſolemn conſent of the ſtates, into one firm, free, and happy conſtitution, is one of the moſt memorable events which we meet with in the Britiſh annals. Every man's particular advantage under the happy union of the two nations, obliges him to acknowledge ſo fortunate an event, and he muſt be very inſenſible who can look back upon theſe great patriots who brought about ſo excellent a ſtate of union and government, and not feel his breaſt warm with gratitude; and worſe than inſenſible, who can go about with malevolent deſigns to interrupt this harmony of government, and divide a nation againſt itſelf.

Wave fierce her enſigns ! wave in BLENHEIM's field,
Till great BAVAR and vanquiſh'd GALLIA yield.
Till fame reſound, and laſting laurels grow
To wreathe BRITANNIA's crown, to ſhade her MALBRO's warlike brow.

With joy the muſe ſhall mark the golden year *,
When GEORGE thy ſceptre ſway'd with ample reign

From

* Under the preſent auſpicious reign, the ſucceſs attending the Britiſh arms has been as great and extenſive, as was ever known in any period whatever.

This ſucceſsful monarch has carried his victorious arms through every quarter of the world; places of ſtrength the moſt remote, and deemed impregnable, have been reduced; the intereſts of Britain, and the glory of her arms have been ſupported through the Mogul's empire by an officer of character from North Britain, with laſting honour to his brave battalions, and with glory and advantage to his king and country. A great

general

From eaſtern BENGAL, to th' ÀTLANTIC plain,
And mighty tyrants ſunk beneath the light'ning of thy ſpear.
I hear thy naval thunders roar,
See GALLIA tremble to her utmoſt ſhore,
See FERDINAND! thy triumphant banners fly
In MINDEN's fatal field; beneath another ſky
I ſee thy tow'rs imperial QUEBEC bow!
MANILLA's walls, HAVANNAH's ſtrength laid low,
While SCOTLAND great in ev'ry field
Thy bloody faulchion thins the war, reſounds thy dreadful ſhield.

With

general, ſeconded by an experienced and ſucceſsful admiral, have accompliſhed the conqueſt of the French empire in North America. The many laurels reaped in Germany by a great perſonage, whoſe courage, ability, and good fortune, will aſtoniſh after-ages, intirely humbled the pride of the enemies of Great Britain; and the great part which the Scots nation bore in all theſe conqueſts, has juſtly procured them the thanks of the country, and of the ſovereign.

With mother's pride behold another train
In whom renew'd thine ancient glories burn,
Riſe like the PHOENIX from his parent's urn:
Like MARS another DOUGLAS ſhakes the plain.
CAMPBELL, CATHCART, and MURRAY bear afar,
Thy banners through the proſtrate ranks of war.
LOTHIAN, MONTGOMERY ſee, the gallant GRAHAM,
And mighty STEWARTS build thy growing fame:
Another patriot, SCOT, his country's prop,
Great GORDON, HAMILTON, LYON, gen'rous HOPE,
HAY, IRVINE, PRIMROSE, MARCHMONT toil to raiſe
Fam'd CALEDON thy tow'ring head, now bleſt with
golden days.

Enough, enough has ALBION mourn'd
By foreign fields and barb'rous civil rage;

Now

Now born to bring the great AUGUSTAN age,
GEORGE ſhuts war's adamantine gates, on golden
hinges turn'd *.
He calls his princely STATES around,
His SENATE bold, yet faithful found,
To hear a kingdom's good diſplay'd,
And prop the public cauſe by their confed'rate aid.
They come, they come, a PATTRIOT BAND,
The envy and the dread of every land:

* Our preſent ſovereign brought the war, by his ſignal and repeated victories to a glorious concluſion. He gave laws to the two mighty monarchies of France and Spain; he gave peace like the father of his people to his kingdoms, and to the whole world. Ever ready to promote the good of his ſubjects, to defend their rights, to advance commerce, and the liberal arts, to temper judgment with mercy, it can be no flattery to compare him to that great emperor Titus Veſpaſian, whoſe beneficence and ſhining virtues intitled him to the appellation of *deliciae humani generis*, the delight of mankind.

Thus great in ROME her godlike ſenate ſhone,
When HE the world's delight thus ſpoke from his imperial throne.

" Great friends and ſenators of ROME!
" On whom their oracle the liſtning world does wait,
" And ſcepter'd monarchs to enquire their fate,
" Attend like gracious Heav'n and ſeal their doom!
" By virtue's arts refine mankind,
" And train to what is great and good the fierce barbarians mind.
" Oppreſſion curb, her lifted rod reſtrain,
" Nor hear the Gods blaſphem'd, and juſtice plead in vain:
" But chiefly toil to build ROME's mighty fame
" On public virtues; quench the guilty flame

" Of

" Of ſelfiſh faction, luxury, and ſtrife,
" That poiſon of our empire's weal, which taints her
" ſprings of life."

" What rear'd th' unfading worth of ancient times,
" Not ſordid gold, nor robes of TYRIAN dye,
" Not revels looſe of waſteful luxury,
" But temp'rance, like a virgin pure, unſtain'd with
" modern crimes.
" Thus CURIUS * bore your fame afar,
" And SCIPIO † hail'd the thunder-bolt of war;

" Your

* A noble Roman, whoſe frugality and honeſty was equal to his moſt undaunted courage: Having conquered Pyrrhus, he divided the lands of Rome, to every man four acres, ſaying, " None ſhould be a captain, who " could not live hardy like a ſoldier." When offered a bribe by the enemies of his country, he rejected it with diſdain, ſaying, " He would ra- " ther be ruler over the rich, than rich himſelf."

† A Roman ſenator, who, having long ſtruggled to reduce the power of Carthage,

" Your conqu'ring eagles thus brave CATO * led,
" And great EMILIUS † rear'd his laurel'd head:
" A ſober firm united ſoul,
" In theſe could all the ſubject world controle:
" Their wealth was glory, their contention great,
" To build with one conſenting mind high ROME's
" imperial ſtate."

GENIUS

Carthage, ſailed over to Africa, ſack'd Carthage, and advanced the glory of the republic to its greateſt ſplendor.

* The elder Cato, a noted ſoldier, and moraliſt. He ſubdued great part of Spain. His grandſon Cato Uticenſis is famous for his oppoſition to Caeſar, when he invaded the liberties of Rome.

† Paulus Emilius. The diſintereſtedneſs of this Roman was remarkable. Having conquered Macedon, he brought all the ſpoil of that ancient and opulent kingdom into the public treaſury, reſerving nothing to himſelf, but the glory he ſo juſtly acquired by his uncommon love to his country, and his attention to ſupport her intereſt.

GENIUS of ALBION! poiſing with juſteſt reign
The ſcale of empire, while the nations come
From eaſtern GANGES, to enquire their doom,
And ſcepter'd Kings from INDIA's weſtern plain;
While millions thro' the peopl'd land,
Look to be bleſs'd, inſpire the ardent band
Of choſen PATRIOTS; rouſe the extinguiſh'd flame
Of ancient worth, which the rude world did tame;
Blaze in the SENATE till renew'd by thee
The PUBLIC VIRTUES riſe in glorious harmony;
Till vice and faction from their throne be hurl'd,
And BRITAIN'S EMPIRE riſe the dread and envy of
the world.

FINIS.

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